Chapter 1: Basic Concepts

The Cultural Landscape: An Introduction to Human Geography
Defining Geography – pg 4

• Word coined by Eratosthenes
  – Geo = Earth
  – Graphia = writing
    • Geography thus means “earth writing”
• Geographers ask *where* and *why*
  – *Location* and *distribution* are important terms

• Geographers are concerned with the tension between *globalization* and *local diversity*

• A division: physical geography and human geography

• *Why are geographers interested in the worldwide spread of McDonald’s?*
Geography’s Vocabulary – pg 5

- Place
- Region
- Scale
- Space
- Connections
Key Issue 1 – How Do Geographers Describe Where Things Are?
Maps – pg 6

- Two purposes
  - As reference tools
    - To find locations, to find one’s way
  - As communications tools
    - To show the distribution of human and physical features
Early Map Making

What are the makers of maps called? What is the science of map making called?

Figure 1-2
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Maps: Scale – pg 7

• Types of map scale
  – Ratio or fraction
  – Written
  – Graphic

• Projection – pg 8
  – Distortion
    • Shape
    • Distance
    • Relative size
    • Direction
Maps: Scale – pg 7

• Projection – pg 8
  – Distortion
    • Shape
    • Distance
    • Relative size
    • Direction
  – What are the names two types of uninterrupted projections? Pg - 9
U.S. Land Ordinance of 1785 – pg 9

• Township and range system
  – Township = 6 sq. miles on each side
    • North–south lines = principal meridians
    • East–west lines = base lines
  – Range
  – Sections
Township and Range System-

Figure 1-5

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• Geographic Information Science (GIScience)
  – Global Positioning Systems (GPS)
  – Remote sensing
  – Geographic information systems (GIS)

Figure 1-7
Figure 1-8

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Key Issue 2 – Why Is Each Point on Earth Unique? Pg 13
Place: Unique Location of a Feature

• Location
  – Place names
    • Toponym
      – What are the different categories of toponyms?
  – Site – pg 14
  – Situation – pg 14 - 15
  – Mathematical location – pg 15
    • What are the names of the elements that make up the grid pattern on earth’s surface?
Location of any place can be described precisely by meridians and parallels:

- Meridians (lines of longitude)
  - Prime meridian
- Parallels (lines of latitude)
  - The equator
The Cultural Landscape—pg 17

• A unique combination of social relationships and physical processes
• Regional studies – ?? (Carl Sauer)
• Each region = a distinctive landscape
• People = the most important agents of change to Earth’s surface
Types of Regions – pg 17

• Formal (uniform) regions
  – Example: Montana

• Functional (nodal) regions – pg 19
  – Example: the circulation area of a newspaper

• Vernacular (cultural) regions – pg 19
  – Example: the American South
    • ‘mental map’
    • What’s another name for ‘vernacular’ region?
Culture – pg 21

• Origin from the Latin *cultus*, meaning “to care for”

• Two aspects:
  – What people care about
    • Beliefs, values, and customs
  – What people take care of
    • Earning a living; obtaining food, clothing, and shelter
Cultural Ecology – pg 24

• The geographic study of human–environment relationships
• Two perspectives:
  – Environmental determinism - ??
  – Possibilism
    • Modern geographers generally reject environmental determinism in favor of possibilism
Physical Processes – pg 24 - 25

• Climate
• Vegetation
• Soil
• Landforms
  – These four processes are important for understanding human activities
Modifying the Environment - pg 26 - 27

• Examples
  – The Netherlands
    • Polders – how are they created?
  – The Florida Everglades

Figure 1-21

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Key Issue 3
Why Are Different Places Similar

• Scale – From Local to Global – pg 28-29

• Globalization of Economy
  – Economic globalization
    • Transnational corporations
  – Cultural globalization
    • A global culture?
Space: Distribution of Features

- Distribution—three features
  - Density
    - Arithmetic
      - How is a country’s arithmetic density calculated?
    - Physiological
    - Agricultural
  - Concentration
  - Pattern
Space–Time Compression – pg 35

Figure 1-29
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Spatial Interaction – pg 36

• Transportation networks
• Electronic communications and the “death” of geography?
• Distance decay - ?

Figure 1-30
Diffusion – pg 39

• The process by which a characteristic spreads across space and over time
• Hearth = source area for innovations
• Two types of diffusion
  – Relocation - ?
  – Expansion - ?
    • Three types: hierarchical, contagious, stimulus
  – Expansion of Culture and Economy
    • Uneven development
Relocation Diffusion: Example

Figure 1-31
The End.

Up next: Population